



## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of Public Affairs

DOT 202-09

Wednesday, December 30, 2009

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### **Presidential Executive Order on Distracted Driving Effective Today Government-wide directive restricts more than 4 million federal employees from texting while driving**

Washington, DC – U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today marked the effective date of President Obama's Executive Order on distracted driving, which will prohibit more than 4 million federal employees from texting behind the wheel while working or while using government vehicles and communications devices. Secretary LaHood also unveiled a new national television PSA and website, <http://www.distraction.gov/>, this week to get the word out on the dangers of distracted driving.

"Every time we climb into the driver's seat, we all have a responsibility for keeping our roads safe by putting away cell phones and other distractions," said Secretary LaHood. "I am proud that the federal government is leading by example, and encourage others to think about how they can set a safety example in their communities whether it's through employee policies, safety awareness campaigns, or just making sure your teen driver knows the risks."

On October 1, 2009, following a national two-day summit on distracted driving, President Obama signed Executive Order 13513, "Federal Leadership on Reducing Text Messaging While Driving," directing federal employees not to engage in text messaging while driving government-owned vehicles; when using electronic equipment supplied by the government while driving; or while driving privately owned vehicles when they're on official government business. The order also encourages federal contractors and others doing business with the government to adopt and enforce their own policies banning texting while driving on the job.

Following the fall summit, Secretary LaHood directed all 58,000 USDOT employees to comply immediately with the President's Executive Order.

"Today it's second nature to remind our friends and loved ones to buckle up and not to drink and drive, and we have to send the same message about texting and talking on the phone," said Secretary LaHood. "It will take everyone working together to put an end to needless crashes and deaths."

A PSA featuring Secretary LaHood began airing across the nation this week reminding drivers to keep their focus on the road – and off their cell phones. The DOT has also launched a new website, [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov), where the public can locate information and resources on distracted driving and find ways to spread the message.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) research shows that nearly 6,000 people died in 2008 in crashes involving a distracted or inattentive driver, and more than half a million were

injured. On any given day in 2008, more than 800,000 vehicles were driven by someone using a hand-held cell phone.

Links:

Distraction.gov: <http://www.distraction.gov/>

Executive Order 13513, "Federal Leadership on Reducing Text Messaging While Driving":  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Executive-Order-Federal-Leadership-on-Reducing-Text-Messaging-while-Driving](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Executive-Order-Federal-Leadership-on-Reducing-Text-Messaging-while-Driving)

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